

REMARKS

The Applicants appreciate the time and consideration that the Examiner has extended in reviewing this application and for the courtesies extended during the telephonic interview on December 18, 2003. A summary of the topics discussed during that interview is set forth below. By the above amendments, claims 1 and 14 have been amended. Also, withdrawn claims 21, 24, 26, 33, 37, 42, 43, 45 and 52 have been amended for the Examiner's consideration for purposes of rejoinder, should the Examiner deem claims 1-19 and 53-56 allowable.

In the Office Action dated July 7, 2003, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 5 and 53-56 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Buoniconti et al. (U.S. 6,030,705). The Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections. As discussed in the telephonic interview, although Buoniconti discloses PETG as a *surface* treatment material for worn surfaces, it does not disclose, teach or suggest PETG as a *core* layer in a laminate, as claimed in independent claim 1. As is known in the art, a core layer does not reside on the surface of a material, such as a laminate. As discussed in the telephonic interview, in order to clarify that the core layer is not a surface layer, independent claim 1 has been amended to recite that the core layer is "below said decorative layer." Also, as discussed, although independent claim 14 was indicated as being allowable in the office action dated July 7, 2003, claim 14 has similarly been amended for clarification purposes to recite that the core layer is "below said decorative layer." Accordingly, in light of the above clarifying amendments, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections of claims 1, 2, 5 and 53-56. It should be understood that the amendment specifying that the core layer is "below" the decorative layer is merely meant to clarify that the core layer is not a layer on the surface of a material. The amendment, however, does not

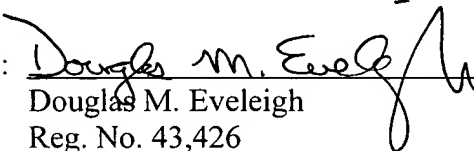
foreclose the addition of other layers between the decorative layer and the core layer. In other words, the core layer need not be *directly* below the decorative layer, but instead can be *indirectly* below the decorative layer with the addition of other layers between the decorative layer and the core layer.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, and in view of the remarks set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that the application and the claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully request favorable consideration and the timely allowance of all pending claims. If, for any reason, the application and claims are not in condition for allowance, or any additional information is required, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (312) 701-8738. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees (or credit any overpayment) associated with this communication to our Deposit Account No. 13-0019. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 not accounted for above, such extension is requested and should also be charged to our Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

By:


Douglas M. Eveleigh
Reg. No. 43,426

MAYER, BROWN, ROWE & MAW LLP
P.O. Box 2828
Chicago, IL 60690-2828
(312) 701-8738

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